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AUTHOR Reilly, Kathryn
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ABSTRACT

Prepared for community college administrators and faculty, this handbook was designed for use after the presentation of either of two videotaped documentaries treating the problems of access to vocational education programs in California community colleges in terms of both entry and retention problems. Following introductory material, information is provided to assist the user in addressing two questions. For the first question, "Are potential or current students at this college having problems accessing and persisting in vocational education programs?" the handbook describes various contexts in which the issue can be raised on campus, offers data on changes in California community college vocational education student enrollments between 1982 and 1984, suggests ways of approaching the problem, and presents a sample set of goals and objectives for identifying students with access problems and a sample student needs survey for current students. For the second question, "What strategies are currently being used on this campus to help students enter and complete vocational education programs and how can new strategies be developed?" the handbook discusses issues related to the institutional context and provides a sample college inventory of access strategies. Appendices include scripts for the administrator and faculty videotapes, a review of the literature on access, a bibliography, and excerpts from transcripts of Access and Retention Forums at the 1985 American Association of Community and Junior Colleges convention. (EJV)

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Evaluation and Training Institute

Problems of Access to Vocational Education Programs in California Community Colleges

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PROBLEMS OF ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES: A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE HANDBOOK FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND FACULTY

Dr. Kathryn Reilly, Director
Student Access Project

Table of Contents

		Page
Introduction		1
Part I.	Guide to Addressing Question #1: Are Potential or Current Students at this College Having Problems Accessing and Persisting in Vocational Education Programs?	2
Part II.	Guide to Addressing Question #2: What Strategies are Currently Being Used On this Campus to Help Students Enter and Complete Vocational Education Programs? How can New Strategies be Developed?	10

Tables

1.	Changes in California Community College Vocational Education Student Enrollments over a Two-Year Period, 1982-84.	3
2.	Vocational Education Student Populations Increasing Over the Period 1982-84.	5
3.	Vocational Education Student Populations Decreasing Over the Period 1982-84.	5
4.	Sample Set of Goals and Objectives for Identifying Students with Access Problems.	7
5.	Sample Student Needs Survey for Students Currently Enrolled in Vocational Education Courses.	8
6.	Sample college Inventory of Access Strategies.	11

Appendix A. Scripts of Videotapes for Administrators and Faculty

Appendix B. Review of the Literature, Bibliography, and Action Plans.

Appendix C. Excerpts of Transcripts from Access and Retention Forums at the 1985 Convention of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges

Introduction

The Evaluation and Training Institute has designed this handbook for use after the presentation of either of two videotapes treating the problems of access to vocational education programs in California Community Colleges. The videotapes are documentaries which define access both in terms of entry problems (recruiting students) and in terms of retention problems (encouraging persistence and discouraging attrition). Current students and administrators present their own views in a realistic and dramatic way. They challenge an audience of community college administrators and/or faculty to focus on their own institution and ask:

1. Are potential or current students at this college having problems accessing and persisting in vocational programs? If so, who are they and what problems are they having?

2. What strategies are currently being used on this campus to help students enter and complete programs? How can new strategies be developed?

The purpose of this handbook is to provide technical assistance to those interested in addressing these questions.

Part I. Guide to Addressing Question #1: Are potential or current students at this college having problems accessing and persisting in vocational programs? If so, who are they and what problems are they having?

A. The Context

Question #1 can be raised in any of the following contexts:

1. Reports back to colleagues about the ETI videotapes and their message. A script of the tapes, the review of the literature, a bibliography, and successful action plans are presented in Appendices A and B.

2. Discussions of the April, 1986 recommendations of the California Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, which states that:[1]

• The Community-College system's Board of Governor's, while maintaining "open access" for students, should establish "minimum academic skill levels appropriate for the different types of courses and programs offered, as well as strengthen the current probation and dismissal standards for all students."

• The Board should "require a mandatory assessment, counseling, placement, and follow-up program" for entering students, and the Governor and the Legislature should provide $50 million for it."

• Students who do not meet minimum academic standards should be required to take non-credit remedial courses.

3. An individual institution's review of student enrollment in vocational education programs. College figures can be compared to those most recently available from the California Community College Vocational Education Data System (see Tables 1-3). Comparative tables could be developed to focus on the differences between the figures for one college and those for the entire system.

[1]Chronicle of Higher Education, April 2, 1986, p. 16.

Table 1

CHANGES IN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT ENROLLMENTS OVER A TWO YEAR PERIOD, 1982-1984

Section I: Total Enrollment	1982-83	1983-84	Percent Change
Male	503,114	462,285	- 8.1
Female	557,637	516,510	- 7.3
Total	1,060,751	978,795	- 7.7
Section II: Racial and Ethnic Designation and Sex			
Amer. Ind./Alaskan			
Male	8,236	8,634	+ 4.8
Female	8,540	11,238	+31.6
Total	16,776	19,872	+18.5
Asian American / Pacific Islander			
Male	45,658	49,408	+ 8.2
Female	42,483	49,465	+16.4
Total	88,141	98,873	+12.2
Black/Non-Hispanic			
Male	44,402	41,628	- 6.2
Female	57,227	54,382	- 5.0
Total	101,629	96,010	- 5.5
Hispanic			
Male	59,349	60,704	+ 2.3
Female	61,614	62,275	+ 1.1
Total	120,963	122,979	+ 1.7
White/Non-Hispanic			
Male	340,421	294,897	-13.4
Female	383,855	333,163	-13.2
Total	724,276	628,060	-13.3
Section III:			
Non-Resident Alien			
Male	5,112	7,011	+37.1
Female	3,918	5,987	+52.8
Total	9,030	12,998	+43.9
Handicapped			
Total	13,407	14,111	+ 5.3

Table 1 (cont.)

Limited English Proficient			
Total	31,286	31,822	+ 1.7
Disadvantaged			
Total	175,626	170,702	- 2.8

Source: California Community Colleges Vocational Education Data System, Postsecondary Program Enrollment and Completion Reports, 1982-83, 1983-84.
Prepared by Evaluation and Training Institute, 1985.

Table 2

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT POPULATIONS INCREASING OVER THE PERIOD 1982-84

Student Population	Percent of Increase
Female Non-Resident Aliens	+52.8%
Male Non-Resident Aliens	+32.1%
Female American Indian/Alaskan	+31.6%
Female Asian American/Pacific Islander	+16.4%
Male Asian American/Pacific Islander	+ 8.2%
Male and Female Handicapped	+ 5.3%
Male American Indian/Alaskan	+ 4.8%
Male Hispanic	+ 2.3%
Male and Female Limited English Proficient	+ 1.7%
Female Hispanic	+ 1.1%

Table 3

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT POPULATIONS DECREASING OVER THE PERIOD 1982-84

Student Population	Percent of Decrease
Male Whites, Non-Hispanic	-13.4%
Female Whites, Non-Hispanic	-13.2%
Males, All populations	- 8.1%
Females, All populations	- 7.3%
Male Blacks, Non-Hispanic	- 6.2%
Female Blacks, Non-Hispanic	- 5.0%
Male and Female Disadvantaged	- 2.8%

B. The Approach

1. Create a college-wide Access Task Force to adopt goals and objectives related to a study identifying students with access and persistence problems. Involve representatives of administration, counseling, and support services, curriculum and instruction and persons related to business or industry.

2. Provide a sample set of such goals and objectives (see Table 4).

3. Identify and conduct the activities related to each goal and objective.

4. Assess the progress made in attaining the goals and objectives and revise activities as necessary.

Table 4

Sample Set of Goals and Objectives for Identifying
Students with Access Problems

Goal #1: To determine which students are having what kinds of problems accessing vocational education programs.

Objective 1.1: To identify the current targets of recruitment (high schools, community organizations, etc.) and the numbers of enrollees from each target.

Objective 1.2: To identify the college personnel responsible for recruitment at each target site.

Objective 1.3: To explore the types of educational and career counseling assistance given to high school and other students interested in vocational education programs.

Objective 1.4: To review the process by which the college gives information about vocational education to prospective students and their parents (e.g. accuracy of written materials, availability to personal contacts, etc.)

Objective 1.5: To conduct a student needs survey among a sample of high school students to determine the extent of information they have about vocational programs.

Goal #2: To determine which current students are having what kinds of problems persisting in vocational education courses.

Objective 2.1: To identify the enrollment and completion patterns by sex, age, ethnic background, educational and handicap status, for all vocational education courses, including those held in the evening and off-campus.

Objective 2.2: To explore the types of educational and career counseling and financial aid assistance given to vocational education students.

Objective 2.3: To review the process by which the vocational education student obtains information about courses, including written materials and personal contacts.

Objective 2.4: To interview vocational education faculty concerning their perceptions of students' difficulties in courses.

Objective 2.5: To conduct a student needs survey among a sample of current and former students to determine their perceptions of problems (see Table 5 for a sample student needs survey).

Table 5

A Sample Student Needs Survey for Students Currently Enrolled in Vocational Education Courses[1]

The purpose of this survey is to identify any concerns or needs you may have as a student in a vocational education course. This questionnaire will not be read by anyone but the data collector and your responses will be kept totally confidential. You should NOT write your name on this paper.

1. Name of course currently attending:_____

Check the responses to the questions below which best describes you:

2. My age is ___under 20, ___between 21-24, ___between 25-29, ___between 35-40, ___between 41-50, ___over 51

3. My ethnic background is ____American Indian/Alaskan
____Asian/American/Pacific Islander
____Black, Non-Hispanic
____Hispanic
____White, Non-Hispanic

4. Are you a U.S. citizen? ____yes
____no

5. Do you require help for any of the following needs?
____English as a second language
____Handicap of physical ability
____Other (please state _____)

In the following questions, check as many responses as you feel are necessary to reflect your feeling or experience.

6. How did you find out about this vocational course/progam?
____High school counselor
____College counselor
____High school teacher
____Parents
____College teacher
____College publications
____Friends
____Community agency (club, church; employment agency)

7. Who helped you most to decide to take this course/program?
____High school counselor
____College counselor
____High school teacher
____Parents
____College teacher
____College publications
____Friends
____Community agency (club, church, employment agency)

[1]Prepared by Evaluation and Training Institute, 1986

8. Since you began this course, which of the following areas have you needed help with in order to stay in the course and finish it successfully:

____Financial aid from the college
____Tutorial assistance with coursework
____Tutorial assistance with reading or math or other general academic skills
____Child Care
____Transportation
____Work schedule if you are employed
____Other (Please state:_____)

9. Since you began this ccurse, have you had problems with any of the following?

____Getting career counseling
____Getting personal counseling
____Getting financial aid counseling
____Completing all assignments on time

10. After beginning this course, who was the most helpful in assisting you to solve any problems you might have had:

____Other students in the class
____Other students, not in the class
____The teacher in the class
____Another teacher, not of the class
____Counselors at the college
____Friends in general
____Family members
____Other (please state _____)

Please write down here any comments you might have about enrolling in this course or staying in it after you were enrolled.

Part II. Guide to Addressing Question #2: What strategies are currently being used on this campus to help students enter and complete vocational education programs? How can new strategies be developed?

A. The Context

New strategies for recruitment and retention in vocational education programs should be based on the needs of the students to be served. Existing programs and practices should be coordinated where possible to involve as many of the following levels as possible:

1. Institutional: Administrators at the institutional level must assume the responsibility of conducting needs assessments and attitude assessments of staff and develop goals and policies relating to access problems. They must communicate with and utilize as many people as possible, e.g. faculty, advisory committees, community members and students.

2. Counseling and Student Services: Student recruitment, assessment, providing of career information, counseling, tutorial assistance, financial aid assistance, child care and other support services are channeled through these offices; thus these staff members must be included in any access strategies.

3. Curriculum and Instruction: Teachers are involved in the creation of learning materials and envrionments in which students will succeed or fail. Teachers are also in the position of being able to develop a supportive relationship with students which may also determine the degree to which a student will persist and complete a course.

Particularly effective and recent models of programs which utilize all of these levels in strategy development are presented in Appendix C. Characteristics of both the Jefferson State Junior College (Birmingham, Alabama) and the Contra Costa (California) plans involve extensive use of instructors as advisors and support personnel.

B. The Approach

1. Based on information gathered during activities mentioned in Part I, the college-wide Access Task Force should develop an inventory of access strategies, both those in use and those desired (see Sample in Table 6).

2. The Access Task Force should obtain and exchange as much information as possible with other colleges regarding successful access strategies (see Action Plans in Appendix B).

3. The Access Task Force should seek funding sources to provide for project and staff development in access strategies.

Table 6

Sample College Inventory of Access Strategies

Directions: Each member of the Access Task Force should complete this form. Composite results should be the basis for further discussion. In Column A., state whether your college currently has such a strategy. If your college does not currently use such a strategy, state whether that strategy is DESIRED at your college, and how important you believe it to be in Column B.

ACCESS STRATEGY	CURRENT STATUS			DESIRED STATUS		
	Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Important	Important	Not Important
1. To recruit students from high school into vocational programs.						
2. To recruit all potential students into vocational programs.						
3. To eliminate any bias or ethnic or sex distinctions in printed college information materials which might create artificial barriers to entry.						
4. To provide career counseling assistance for students interested in vocational programs.						
5. To provide personal (tutorial, financial aid) counseling for those students enrolled in vocational programs						
6. To insure that the instructional methods in each class encourage success and mastery of subject matter.						
7. To provide facilities in vocational education courses which are accessible to handicapped students.						
8. To conduct follow-up studies of registrants who do not complete courses.						
9. To provide inservice or professional development activities for vocational education administrators, teachers, and counselors to improve their knowledge of access problems and strategies.						
10. In the space on the next page, write in any strategy that now exists or should exist at your institution but does not appear above. Rate them in the same manner as the ones above.						

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Table 6

Space for Answer to Number Ten

APPENDIX A

Scripts of Videotapes for Administration and Faculty

Script

Problems of Access to California Community Colleges:
A Videotape for Administrators[1]

Student # 1: The counselors are there, and they're very helpful, and they're always willing to listen to you. The problem is that they don't all have the right answers. What I have found to be best is to ask as many counselors in the different departments as I can, and then choose what is best for me. If we had more people who had that information, it would make our going back to school a lot easier. It is very frightening to go back to school when you know you can't read and you can't write.

Student # 2: One of the problems was financial aid. I think a lot of people could be helped if they could get their financial aid on time and if it didn't take so long to be processed. Sometimes that can be the deciding factor in whether a re-entry person or a student can make it or not make it. A lot of students were coming to school at night, and the financial aid office would be closed at night, so therefore it was really a hardship for them to get here and get their papers in on time, and if they did have problems the offices would be closed and they'd have to take off from work and come in...

Student #3: When I finally got up enough courage to ask someone how to get into an office administration course, I felt like I was at the DMV, trying to find out which line was for the driver's test. The information clerks were rude and kept saying they didn't understand me. If it weren't for some of my friends, I would never have gotten here.

Student #4: The problems that I had were with counseling. I didn't get the correct counseling and guidance, so I went through the schedule and tried to pick out my own program. After I did that, I spoke with the counselor to try to find out what the requirements were for my program. After she told me, I completed the courses; I filled out my petition for graduation and they denied it because they said I hadn't completed the correct academic program. After that, I didn't know which way to go, so I wandered around until I went into the re-entry-equity center, and there I was given tests to find out which way I really wanted to go.

Narrator: The issue of access in terms of entry and persistence in vocational education programs in community colleges is not a new one, for the nation in general or for California in particular. As Drs. Koltai and Wolfe of the Los Angeles Community College District have stated: "We need to prepare for a reemphasis on access...through the hard

[1] The videotape for faculty is essentially the same as that for administrators, except for additions as indicated in this script.

times of the last decade our student services functions have absorbed a disproportionate amount of retrenchment. In many cases...our financial aid and other support services are not what they have been at other times in our past."

Faculty Member #1: (A Culinary Arts Instructor) When I look at the student lists for my classes now I realize how much the student population has changed and what a challenge that is for me in the classroom. The major problem is with basic skills like reading and math and communications. I can try to get students ready to take a job in this field, but it seems that it takes so much more time because they are not coming in adequately prepared and so many more of them have language barriers to overcome.

Narrator: The largest increases in vocational education student enrollments over the two-year period from 1982-84 came in the population of non-resident aliens. Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians/Alaskans also increased. There was a drop of 13 percent in White students and a decrease of about 6 percent overall for Black students. Hispanic students increased slightly in numbers.

Faculty Member #2: (A Word Processing Instructor) This program, as you can see, is really limited to the number of pieces of equipment we have available here in the area, and consequently we wind up having to turn away students; as a matter of fact, when this semester began, we had to turn away at least 25 students per class. We're open from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm, and we have classes running all day long — not only word processing, but also accounting. It is unfortunate that we have to turn students away because we are so limited by the equipment.

Faculty Member #3: (A Fashion Design Instructor) I have many part-time students now compared to even five years ago. The students always seem to have problems balancing their school work and their job demands. Most of them work at least 20 hours a week and then expect to be able to carry 8 to 10 units on top of that. I also have some women who can't concentrate on their work because they've had to hassle with child care. And frankly I'm not critical of any of these students because I'm a part-time teacher myself. I have to work in the real world, too, in order to be able to do what I like best -- to teach.

Student #5: The college is going through a lot of changes... financially. So it's tough on the students. It's tough on me. I work my way through school, I get financial aid, but sometimes it's very late in paying off.

Student #6: Let's face it. We all have to work, but I wish there were more jobs for students like this one on campus. It saves me driving back and forth from school to work, a problem

lots of my friends have. This job is great because... it gives me a chance to help others solve the same kinds of problems I had.

Student #7: I dropped out of school at age 17 and got a job full-time, but I never made more than $5 an hour, and I knew if I didn't do something that was going to be where I was going to be for the rest of my life.

Dr. David Wolfe, President, Los Angeles Pierce College: Of course one of the major student populations we have great difficulty in having access to is the high school drop-out. These people are particularly hard for us to find because we become aware of them usually only after they've been out of school for two or three years, usually because they are locked into an employment track which really does not provide them with the kind of future they're after. When they come to us, we really have two problems we have to deal with -- not only finding meaningful vocational education programs for them but also helping them to remediate sometimes very serious educational deficiencies.

I think we need to improve things right from the beginning of the high school process. We need to make the image of vocational education improved in the eyes of young people. I think we can attain that by working more closely with high school counselors on this matter. If we can achieve this, it will be possible for high school students to move smoothly through their years in the high school and then directly into vocational courses of their choosing when they go into college.

Student #8: In high school my counselor didn't know anything about the vocational programs at the college. When I told him I didn't know what I wanted to do, he gave me some test and sent me three times to see the rep from San Jose State. I knew I'd never make it there so I just quit and went to work at McDonald's. When I got tired of French Fries and Big Macs -- that's when I decided to take a few courses at night.

Student #9: One of the problems I had when I came here (I'm from South America) was to try to find out what I wanted to do. It was very hard because my knowledge of English was very limited at the time and I couldn't find counselors who could relate to my problem. It was very hard for me to make friends on campus, but finally through some friends, I was able to find the proper channels, to talk to the right counselors and then find the right direction in a vocational program.

Dr. Fujimoto: We have an ethnic population that is coming into the country in greater numbers. I'm talking about the Hispanic element and the Asian element, many of them

immigrants who need to compete in our world market and then need much more access. So the language barrier, the cultural barrier -- these are coping skills that are necessary for them to survive. I don't think we do as good a job there as we could.

Dr. Richard Moyer, Assistant Dean for Student Services, Los Angeles Pierce College: The cutback in support to Community Colleges has perhaps had its greatest impact in the area of services for students. Our students in particular need all types of guidance. They need it for financial aid and how they can secure it, they need it in parttime jobs but most important, they need it in counseling. We now have mandatory orientation programs for students who enroll in 6 or more units, but a lot of community college students sign up for one or two classes before they actually enroll on a full-time basis. They then slip through one's fingers, so to speak, in terms of getting counseling.

Ms. Eve Madigan, Director, Equity, ReEntry Center, Los Angeles Trade Technical College: The Equity Center is a student service and it is based strictly on referral from students who might be in crisis on this campus -- crisis being that they might have to identify a major. If a student is an undeclared major, there is a high potential drop-out rate, so we try to set goals for those students. We also identify learning disabilities and we have a reentry center for these people coming back to school.

Dr. Wolfe: Who needs to know about these problems? Well, I think in the long run, clearly, state and national level policy-makers need to be involved with it. But in the short term, I think locally there is a great deal we can do. First of all, we need to develop all kinds of communication channels between the community colleges and the secondary schools. I'm talking about contacts between college presidents and counselors, between community college counselors and high school counselors, between all kinds of faculty members involved with this issue. It is also clear to me that locally we can involve certain state agencies that have a lot to do with the employment of young people. Here in California that would be the Department of Employment Development. Here at Pierce College we now have a school relations officer who spends 100% of his time working with the counselors in the 19 high schools we have direct relations with. There are of course, lots of other partnership opportunities which could help us address this problem.

Dr. Leslie Koltai, Chancellor of Los Angeles Community College District: It is very important that the Master Plan look at the Community Colleges as an <u>equal</u> partner of higher education, rather than looking at the two-year college as the bottom, then the CSU, then the University of California. As a matter of fact, we have more students coming back to the community college from the four year institutions so that they can obtain appropriate degrees and appropriate

skills. The second area of concern relates to the fact that the structure of higher education in the United States is such that we're supposed to teach and emphasize general education. I believe that general education belongs to all segments of Higher Education, and now we are talking about the perfect fit between high school, community college, and four-year institutions, which suggests that even medical doctors, as they prepare for their life, should take general education on a graduate school level. The third concept, which I think is very important to remember, is that these days we talk a lot about high technology, and I would like to assure you that there are many students who are interested in low technology. High technology -- computer sciences, applied sciences, are only a small part of the 2-year vocational curriculum, and we need the appropriate preparation to teach all aspects of vocations and topics which didn't exist a year or 2-3 years ago. Vocational education is the most dramatic changing aspect of community college education.

Dr. Wolfe: So strategically, I think that our approach is really four-fold. First, we need to enhance our counseling efforts. We need to have greater co-ordination between the work being done in our community college and the work being done at the high school.

Secondly, we need to enhance our outreach efforts. We need to get deeper into the community -- both the business community and the community of students, particularly minority students, to be sure we're attracting students who are interested in these programs.

Thirdly, we need to be a little bit more bold about our curriculum change. New ideas, such as 2 + 2 programs, which sort of blur the border between high school and college, have been successful in various parts of the country, and we need to use them here in California more aggressively.

And finally, we need to give renewed emphasis to the needs of the individual student, whether it be remediation, financial aid whatever kinds of support activities are necessary to insure the success of a particular student. We need to make sure we're in a position to provide that. It's through these four approaches, I believe, that we'll be able to enhance our vocational offerings and overcome some of the shortcomings that we have seen in recent years.

Student trustee: I just hope that people will listen to what we have to say today. Otherwise, a lot of kids are just going to feel it necessary to drop out or quit altogether, and that would be an awful shame.

APPENDIX B

Review of the Literature and Bibliography on Problems of Access to Vocational Education Programs in Community Colleges

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction: The Continuing Issue of Access

The issue of access in terms of entry and persistence in vocational education programs in community colleges is not a new one, for the nation in general or for California in particular. It was first addressed in the early 1970s by several authors (Brossman and Roberts, 1973; Medsker and Tillery, 1971; Moore, 1970; Knoell, 1973), and then treated again in the late 1970s (Olivas, 1979; Phillips, Carmel and Renzullo, 1977; Walsh, 1979). By 1982 the issue was raised once again by Cohen's dramatic statement that access was a problem of the institution, not the individual (Cohen and Brawer, 1982, p. 58), and the California Vocational Education Accountability Report's statement of one of its goals as "to ensure equal access to vocational education programs for all persons in all communities." (California Vocational Education Accountability Report, 1982-83, pp.31-32). These concerns were echoed in the Statewide Longitudinal Study (SLS) of California Community Colleges and the review paper on the vocational education segment of that study (MacMillan, 1982; Channeson, 1982).

In addition, the Educational Testing Service commissioned a study of access and success in community colleges in 1984 (Cortada, 1984), and the Chancellor of the Los Angeles Community College District and the Vice President for Academic Affairs at Los Angeles Harbor College called for a return to the issue of access at a Colloquium on the Critical Issues Facing the Community Colleges held in Los Angeles in February 1984. At that time, the presidents and chancellors of 13 of the nation's largest community college districts and four professors of higher education discussed the issue and concluded:

"We need to prepare for a reemphasis on access...through the hard times of the last decade, our student services functions have absorbed a disproportionate amount of retrenchment. In many cases...our financial aid, child care, and other support services are not what they have been at other times in our past." (Koltai and Wolf, 1984, p.43)

As recently as July, 1985, access was again discussed by participants at a conference sponsored by the California Postsecondary Education Commission. Patrick Callan, Director of the Commission, stated that "Past and current programs to increase...access...have helped somewhat, but after 20 years of efforts, there isn't a lot to show for it...the discussion of this issue has not been as broad or profound as it needs to be...We need a sense of urgency about it now if we are going to make any long-term progress." (McCurdy, 1985, p. 1)

Identifying the Student Populations

The literature which attempts to identify the student populations having access and persistence problems has to be viewed in terms of several difficulties. First, as Cohen and Brawer pointed out, the very definition of a student has changed. Whereas before it rested on the assumption of sequential attendance, now it is defined by the educational goal of the students, in terms of whether they have limited or specific objectives in taking courses. This is an important distinction when one looks at retention data, for example, because some students who "drop-out" may in fact be "completers" who only need one course or two to satisfy their objectives. Second, as the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges Fact Sheet on Two-Year College Students warns, "Nationwide statistical data on two-year college students can only be regarded as approximate and should be critcally viewed within the context of the methodology used in their compilation." (ERIC Fact Sheet, June, 1982).

Given these difficulties, it is nevertheless possible to identify some sources for statistics on the student populations at risk for access problems, and the specific vocational education students in that category. The sources for the California Community College population treat both the general population of students and those in vocational education programs.

The picture for the general population was outlined by Hayward, who reported on the major recent trend of decline in community college enrollments, with the unusually large decrease in the Black student population mentioned (Hayward, 1985). In spring, 1984, a study was undertaken to analyze enrollment in California's community colleges. A survey of 10,247 students at 62 community colleges revealed that four out of every five students were working, regardless of whether they attended schools full or parttime, that one-half of the students were enrolled for occupational skills, and that the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the students were comparable to those of all Californians, except that Asians were overrepresented and Hispanics were underrepresented (Chancellor's Report: Student Profile, 1984).

The general student population was also delineated in the Statewide Longitudinal Study (SLS) of Community College students, and various characteristics of the population emerged from that study and the offical comments it evoked. Of the 17 student prototypes described in that report, six fell into the category of "vocational prototypes" (the program completer, the job seeker, the job up-grader, the career changer, and the license maintainer (Knoell, 1982). Goff, in his informal observations of the SLS, identified the major problem facing community colleges as their ability to cope with the ever-increasing diversity of students, and pointed especially to the 20% of the evening students who attend college on an on-and-off basis, and the prominence of job conflict as a reason for these students to drop out (Goff, 1982).

Dominici specifically examined the implications of the SLS in terms of recruitment and attrition of students and reported that "the fact that 58% of the students had left high school one year or less prior to entering the community colleges suggests a need for a close working relationship with

high schools and raises questions of how to reach the 42% who are not recent high school students." She also observed that the finding that 41% of the day students and 60% of the evening students were not attending classes to receive credit suggested that attrition in the traditional sense may not be an applicable term for today's community colleges (Dominici, 1982). Similar findings were reported in the annual updates of statistics on Community College transfer students (Update of Community College Transfer Student Statistics, 1983). Even the phenomenon of the reverse transfer student has been explored in the general literature, with a study by Renkiewicz, who noted that the majority of these students were employed and wanted to transfer from four-year institutions in order to be able to continue working (Renkiewicz, 1982).

The two major sources of data for student enrollment in vocational education programs are the California Vocational Education Accountability Reports and the Vocational Education Data System (VEDS) reports. Both of these also indicate the changing nature of the student population. In the accountability report, it was reported that in 1982-83 one-quarter of the students enrolled in the health occupations programs were minorities and women, and that in the technical programs, one-quarter were female, up 2% over the previous year. In general, the students with limited English proficiency (LEP) were up 1% over the previous year and the total minority population was up 6%, to just under 37% overall. For the most recent statistics on enrollment, the VEDS enrollment and completion reports, which are complete through 1984, indicate large increases in the numbers of non-resident Aliens, American Indian/Alaskan, and Asian/American/Pacific Islanders. There are large decreases in the numbers of White, non-Hispanic students, and Blacks, non-Hispanic. These trends were also found in earlier studies at individual campuses, particularly at the Los Angeles Community College District (Cohen and Brawer, p.41; Erickson, 1982).

Barriers to Access

Although most of the recent research studies of barriers to higher education for various student populations were concerned with higher education or community colleges in general (Adolphus, 1982; Astin, 1982; Astin and Burciaga, 1981; Cohen, 1984-85; Ortiz, 1983; Rounds, 1984), they discussed topics which are also relevant to access and persistence in vocational education programs at the community college level.

Most researchers categorized the access barriers in terms of three major categories: academic, social/psychological/cultural, and economic. These categories were used in the literature review encompassing concerns of both men and women in a Gender Equity Resource Compendium prepared for the Chancellor's Office by the Evaluation and Training Institute and in its Project Solo, a continuation of the Project to Assess the Status of Women Students and Employees in Vocational Education, "PASSEVE" (Evaluation and Training Institute, 1982, 1985a, 1985b). The categories were also used in the classification of the Vocational Education Resource Packages prepared for the Chancellor's Office by Educational Evaluation and Research, Inc., which developed 12 packages dealing with disadvantaged, limited English proficient, handicapped, and displaced homemaker populations (Wright, 1984).

Roueche and associates (1984) have addressed the problem of academic barriers to postsecondary students and concluded that colleges have no choice but to accept low-achieving students but that developmental programs, such as tutorial programs, must then be designed to help those students learn and succeed. Student's lack of basic skills was a major barrier discussed in the Project Solo study, also, and Astin and Burciaga treated the problems of Hispanics in the educational "pipeline" as well, citing lack of effective instructional programs to promote cultural awareness and bilingualism and inadequate career counseling as major deterrents. Cohen (1982) pointed out the need for strengthening articulation between community colleges and secondary schools in terms of academic standards, with greater integration of support services with the instructional program. Wiener (1984-85) also discussed the necessity of teaching basic skills to community college students.

In terms of the social/psychological/cultural barriers, one of the classic studies is that of Simcoe (1979), in which the results of an Obstacle/Success Factor Survey administered to 81 vocational educators was analyzed. More recently, both Hayward (1985) and Cohen (1984) have published concerns over the problems of Black and Hispanic students. Others have compiled resources for use with handicapped students (Corrada and Colfer, 1982), women (Evaluation and Training Institute, 1985a, 1985b; Bellorado, 1985), and other special poulations (Educational Evaluation and Research, Inc., 1984). Some of the specific issues discussed were: 1) Institutional racism, which subtly sent the message that minority students and faculty were inferior; 2) Sex-role socialization, which through overt and subtle messages socializes students into traditional male and female roles; 3) Lack of self-esteem, and poor personal development due to cultural differences and negative labeling and low parental expectations. It was also pointed out that there are often misconceptions about vocational careers which must be overcome before students will enroll in such courses.

The review of the economic barriers in most of the previously cited studies mentioned the effects of economic pressures on student access to programs and the effect of lack of finances on the continuing enrollment of students. For Hispanics in general, the economic barriers were difficult to overcome, as Astin and Burciaga pointed out, since Hispanic students often had a lower socio-economic status, a greater concern over college finances and expected to work at an outside job during college. The economic needs of women, including issues concerning child care, were reviewed by Martin (1983) and also by Stephenson in a booklet cataloging suggestions and advice. The 1983 revision of the Women's Rights Handbook also gives a summary of the economic issues for women (California Department of Justice, 1983). Finally, economic barriers have been formed in the recent era of fiscal restraint operating at community colleges: the imposition of the tuition fees and the remedial programs and counseling services. These were outlined in a summary of legislation affecting California community colleges (Klass, 1984), and specifically the Los Angeles Community Colleges (Ireland Gegna, 1983). In Simcoe's study, the lack of school finances to acquire materials, support services, and aids, was cited as the major obstacle to success of vocational programs.

Action Plans

The review of the literature concerning successful action plans for overcoming barriers to access in vocational education programs revealed many single sources of information, most of which can be obtained either through the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, the ERIC Clearinghouse for Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, or the California Vocational Occupational Information Center for Educators (VOICE):

1. From Educational Evaluation and Research, Inc., Menlo Park, Ca.: Vocational Resource Packages (VERPS) for:
A Program to Strengthen Reading and Writing Skills;
Reading and Study Skills Modules;
A Practical Writing Curriculum;
A Guide for Career Counseling Spanish-Speaking and Chicano Students;
A Guide for Career Counseling Vietnamese;
A VESL-Electronics Curriculum;
A Work/Experience Cooperative Education Program for Disabled Students;
A Career Planning Guide for Students with Disabilities;
A Guide for Vocational Skills Assessment for Disabled Students;
Support services for Women;
An Educator's Guide for Improving Programs for Non-Traditional Students;
A Manual for Overcoming Barriers for Displaced Homemakers in Nontraditional Occupations.

A Directory of California Community Colleges Exemplary Vocational Education Programs and Materials for Special Population Students is also available.

2. From Evaluation and Training Institute, Los Angeles, Exemplary Individual Action Plans. Programs To Improve Gender Equity in the Community Colleges.

3. From VOICE:
Simcoe's Vocational Equal Access Research Report (Item 0063);
Report of a training program for Educators focusing on students with special needs (Item p-9577.5);
Assisting Handicapped Students in Vocational Technical Programs in Community Colleges (Item 00544);
Disadvantaged and Underrepresented Vocational Student Retention Program (Item P-30-00-734);
Reentry/Retention Center, Citrus College (Item P-CC-732).

4. From ERIC Clearinghouse on Junior Colleges:
Implications of SLS for Student Services (ED 220 128);
Articulation with Secondary, Postsecondary and Higher Education;
One Look at the SLS (ED 220 121);
SLS: Implications for Counseling, Guidance and Student Placement (ED 220 127);
Informal Observations on the SLS by Henry Weiss (ED 220 122);
Evaluation of Napa Valley College's Student Orientation, Assessment, Advisement and Retention Program (ED 250 026);
Resource Guide for Educational Services (Student Services) for Colorado Community and Junior Colleges and Area Vocational Schools (ED 254 264);
Alternatives for Revitalization of Student Services Programs (ED 243 507).

5. From the National Center for Research in Vocational Education:

Equity and Vocational Education: Guidelines for the 1980s (ED 242 895).

Hispanics and Vocational Education. (ED 242 824).

Vocational Education for the Handicapped. Inservice Instructional Unit IA. (ED 220 652).

Equity from a Vocational Education Research Perspective. Research and Development Series (No. 214E. ED 215 161).

A Plan for Sex Equity in Postsecondary Vocational Programs, State of Hawaii (ED 206 881).

Supportive Services for Women Project (SSWP): End of Project Report, 1980-81 (ED 205 230).

Equality in Vocational Programs. conselor/Teacher Handbook (ED 201 871).

Needs Assessment for Child Care Services among Women in New York State Occupational Education Programs (ED 198 869).

Access to Vocational Education. A Planning System for Local Secondary and Post Secondary Program and Facility Accessibility. Exemplary Programs and Practices (ED 197 216).

Resources for Working with Disadvantaged Students and Limited English Speaking Students: An Annotated Bibliography (ED 183 231).

APPENDIX C

Excerpts of Transcripts from Access and Retention Forums at the 1985 Convention of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges

FORUM 35 MAINTAINING OPEN ACCESS THROUGH
MATRICULATION AND FACULTY ADVISING

This is a live recording from the 65th Annual Convention of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, held in San Diego, California, April 14 through 17, 1985.

I am Carmen Decker, President of the State Wide Academic Center for the California Community Colleges, and Professor of English and Spanish at Cypress College.

It is a pleasure for me to introduce to you the distinguished members of our panel. To my immediate right, Dr. Ronald Farland, Administrator from the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, and Coordinator of the activities of the Chancellor's Staff for Academic Quality. He will provide background information on the formation and charge of the task force, and he will discuss the role of matriculation in maintaining open access.

Next to him, Dr. Mark L. Stein, President Elect of the State Wide Academic Centers and Professor of English at Palomar College. He will outline and discuss the goals and guidelines developed by the academic Senate for the use of facilities around the State.

And, to my left, Miss Holly DeCordova, College Skills Coordinator at Contra Costa College, and Coordinator of their Faculty Advising Program. She will discuss the pioneering efforts of Contra Costa College in developing and assessing a program of faculty advisement.

The topic of our presentation links the maintenance of open access to the establishment of programs in matriculation and faculty advisement. The matriculation proposal which has been adopted by the Board of Governors encourages the coordination of activities between student services and instructional services, in orientation assessment, and counseling or advising. It also recommends that faculty become more actively involved in the monitoring of student academic progress and in the early identification of students with a potential of transfer.

Dr. Farland: Thank you Carmen. It is my responsibility on this panel this morning to provide the audience with background on the concept that we've come to call Student Matriculation, considering both the historical development of that concept and the basic formulation of it as it appears in the Board of Governors' adopted student matriculation plan.

Student matriculation I have come to believe with hind sight is the offspring of two parallel sets of forces: One which is clearly educational, and one that I would call physical/political.

On the one hand it began to be apparent in the early to mid-1970's that the open access admission of community colleges had attracted a diversity of students with a range of skill levels so that it made it increasingly difficult to maintain collegiate-level standards of rigor in degree and certificate courses, and, at the same time keep a sincere promise of the idea of open access.

Out of this challenge there began to develop an interest in the assessment of students' language and computational skills at entrance with the subsequent advisement or guidance into appropriate level courses and programs. This approach which emerged I think largely out of faculty concerns initially, represents that dimension of matriculation in history which was truly grass roots in nature, and which was most clearly grounded in concern for educational quality and standards.

Fullerton College, Southwestern College nearby in Chula Vista, and Sacramento City College, all independently as far as I can tell, were the early evangelists in assessment related to placement and courses. The concept caught on quickly, however, and there developed a loose coalition of colleges interested in this idea, which formed the learning assessment and retention consortium better known in California as LARC.

The second set of forces emerged largely from the concern of State level policy makers. It was as much grounded in fiscal concerns as it was in concerns about educatinal standards, but there was a little mixture of both I would say from where I sit in Sacramento.

1982-1983 you will recall was the year that the State of California and much of the rest of the nation was in the depths of a fiscal crisis and it was also the year in which the legislature in this State got very serious about its proposals which it had been tossing around for some time, to introduce fees into Community Colleges for the first time. That may not seem like a big deal to those of you who come from states where community colleges have always charged fees, even nominal fees, but in California, community colleges had always been free and it was a rather major controversy.

The Academic Senate's proposal assumes in addition to more uniform and formal registration in admission processes, the existence of thorough student assessment procedures, designed not only to consider basic skills levels, but also students aptitudes, study skills and educational aspirations.

What then is matriculation as defined by the Board's matriculation plan? Let me answer that by quoting a couple of sections from the plan itself, beginning first with some policy assumptions that include statements about what matriculation is not, and which I think are most related to the title of this forum this morning.

First, it is assumed that the limitation of matriculation must be considered with the California Community Colleges' commitment to open access. Matriculation with its attendent skills assessment, guidance of students into appropriate courses, and monitoring the student's progress, is not a mechanism for screening out students but rather one to assure that access to the institution is followed by maximum opportunity for success in its programs.

Second, support for implementing matriculation should in no way be construed as suggesting a need to restrict or reduce the mission of community colleges. Rather, by assisting students to choose programs and services that are appropriate to their readiness and their educational goals, matriculation should result in a clear delineation of functions within the mission of community colleges, and provide a greater opportunity to maintain distinctive standards appropriate to each function.

Third, it is assumed that among the diversity of students who enroll in community colleges, there are some who would not need to participate in the full matriculation process and therefore might be exempted from those components which are either unnecessary or inappropriate given those students' prior educational performance of current objectives. For example, you already have an associate degree and you are coming back for some courses or something.

The plan defines matriculation as follows:

> Matriculation is a process which brings a college and a student to enroll for credit into an agreement for the purpose of realizing the student's educational objective, the agreement acknowledges responsibilities of both parties to obtain those objectives through the college's established programs, policies and requirements. On the college's part, the agreement includes providing an admission process an orientation to college programs, services and procedures, pre-enrollment assessment and counseling, advisement and counseling for course selection, and of course a suitable curriculum to meet those needs, continuous followup on student progress with referral to support services when needed and a program of institutional research and evaluation. On the student's part, the agreement includes expression of at least a broad educational objective within a reasonable period of enrollment, diligence in class attendance and completion of assigned course work, and completion of courses in maintenance of progress according to standards established by the colleges. The components of matriculation then are as follows:
>
> 1. A uniform application for admission process which we are now under pressure to have for all or most people, and analysis of transcripts of prior academic work.

2. An orientation process designed to acquaint new students with colleges functions programs and services, performance expectations, and procedural requirements.

3. Pre-enrollment assessment not only of basic language and computational skills, but also student aspirations, interests, study skills, and need for referrals to such services such as financial aid, child care or specialized assessment for the learning disabled or the limited English speaking of which we have many in this state.

4. Academic advisement and counseling for course placement based in part upon the results of the assessment and the issue there is, should it be mandatory or voluntary.

5. A mechanism (usually computerized) to permit monitoring of student's academic progress, and the provision of follow-up counseling or advisement, especially for students who have not declared a specific educational goal, for those who are in remedial courses, or those who are encountering academic difficulties.

6. And finally and last, the model includes institutional research or evaluation components which would aim to learn not only whether the matriculation service components are effective, but also whether remedial offerings are effective in building student skills to the level where they can succeed in college level degrees and certificate courses. The whole issue of remediation, post secondary education in California is another giant looming cloud which is being looked at very much by policy makers and we think that matriculation really will provide the vehicle to find out how successful we really are in this area.

Dr. Stein: Thank you Carmen. I've been asked to speak specifically on the faculty perspective of one important component of the matriculation process which is instructor advisement. I use the term instructor advisement rather than faculty advisement because counselors themselves have convinced me that instructor advisement is not only more accurate a term, but it is also somewhat healthier. I met with a group of counselors one evening in a dark alley and they convinced me through the stunning force of their argument that they too were faculty and that what they did was faculty advisement and that the faculty advisor was nothing new although instrutor advisement might be, and so now I try very conscientiously and wisely to speak only of instructor advisement.

As we became involved in discussions about matriculation both on a State level in California and on a local level, it became obvious that there was going to be a need for extensive advisement involved with matriculation which we could not do under the present system. This was partly simply a matter of resource in there were not enough counselors, particularly in the post-Propostion 13 era, to do the kind of advisement that matriculation necessitates. But, it wasn't simply a matter of resources, the more we thought about the nature of advisement we did in community colleges, the more we realized that there was potentially a great deal to be gained by changing the system somewhat.

We saw that there was much to be gained through involving classroom instructors in the process of advisement. I was gratified to see in the N.I.E. Report on Excellence in Higher Education which I am sure most of you are familiar with, one of the specific recommendations mentioned faculty advisement specifically: "All colleges should offer a systematic program of guidance, and advisement that involves students from matriculation through graduation, student affairs personnel, peer counselors, faculty and administrators, should all participate in this system on a continuing basis." I think that is a very very important point and I am glad they made it.

I think there are enormous numbers of benefits to instructor advisement. The most obvious is that it can simply extend the reach and influence of the counseling staff, in other words the existing goals of the counselors can be realized by many more students than there are currently. But also, it increases the amount of information about specific majors and careers that students are offered. I'll discuss this a little bit more later but, counselors simply do not know, cannot know as much as I do about appropriate patterns of courses for English majors or about career possiblilities for English majors. I can provide more information than a counselor can on those specific issues, just as the counselor can provide much more information about articulation than any other matters than I can as an instructor.

Thirdly, I think that instructor advisement can improve retention at community colleges, or indeed at any colleges through personal interest in academic process. There is no substitute for a faculty member speaking on an individual basis to a student and showing an interest in that student's academic progress.

Fourthly, I think that instructor advisement models would improve the instructors awareness of program offerings and educational requirements, it is amazing and sometimes frightening how little some of us know about the programs offered on our own campuses let alone other campuses, so instructor advisement, one of these functions although ansilliary of course, is to educate the faculties themselves about their own institutions and about neighboring institutions.

And fifth, I think that instructor advisement would improve the early identification of potential transfer students. This is of particular issue in California and may be in many other states as well, but there are some concerns. The community colleges are not transfering as many students as they should be, particularly true of minority students. Faculty members involved in advisement can be very very useful here.

Teachers have to be involved in the process of developing a model for instructional advisement. There has to be a great deal of cooperation and having worked extensively with counselors and the counseling organization in California, in developing these goals and guidelines, I have a great deal of faith that such cooperation will be forthcoming.

There has to be a clear delineation of duties between the teaching advisement and the advisement that the counselors are doing. There has to be a careful training of teachers not simply by the counselors, but by teachers as well -- teachers training teachers or teacher counselor teams training teachers. And there have to be necessary tools, I'll say a little bit more about that under the guidelines.

There must be a commitment from the institution also to recompence in a reasonable way faculty advisors, either through salary or through release time, this has to be seen not as a punishment but as a reward and it is something that is intended to improve the quality of instruction and advisement, not simply save money. Advisement should be limited to areas of the instructor's expertise, though not necessarily to a specific teaching discipline.

Another of these guidelines talks about appropriate tools for the instructor advisor, and I think that is absolutely critical. The advisor is going to have to have transcripts; he is going to have test scores but he is also going to have some sort of predictability model, and that can be set up in a number of ways. But one of the most effective ways perhaps is for the instructor to have written information about individual courses which show the predictability of success for different profiles of students in that course.

The conclusion is simply that I believe that instructor advisement can be a very positive step for colleges, not only because it will improve the quality and the amount of information available to students, and thus help them to develop more coherent and more effective academic plans, but also because it will have a number of other effects, all of which will lead directly or indirectly to the goal that we are all pursuing, the improvement of instruction.

Thank you very much.

Ms. Holly De Cordova: I will try to address the general concept of matriculation presented by Dr. Farland, and the more specific concerns and guidelines regarding faculty advisement while discussing Contra Costa College and its sort of quasi-matriculation model in that we began the model prior to the state discussions on matriculation, and are just recently bringing it more into line with the guidelines as presented by Dr. Farland.

I need to tell you first a little bit about Contra Costa College for those of you you who aren't familiar with California Community Colleges. Contra Costa College is located on the border of San Pablo and Richmond, California.

They have approximately 7,000 students, we are more than 50% minority. We are in an area that is industrial and we don't anticipate a great deal of growth with regard to suburban housing.

In 1979, Contra Costa College became increasingly aware of two major problems. One of those problems was the difficulty in retaining students. Our attrition rate was more than we were willing to tolerate. And, the other was an instructional problem. And that instructional problem was caused by the fact that we had open access in its truest sense. Many of the students simply mailed in a registration packet and enrolled in anything which they thought sounded good in the catalog. Well if you've ever read a college catalog, it all sounds good, and you don't get a great deal of information regarding expectations.

So, our faculty was discovering that when they entered a classroom on any given first day of class, the range of skills level sitting in the seats in front of them was beyond their ability to tailor instructions so, they essentially probably ended up teaching the middle which meant that if this was continued we would have serious curricular problems because our concern was standard on the one hand, was being affected by out wanting to retain a significant number of students in our classrooms on the other hand.

So, Contra Costa College opted to pilot an assessment of advising programs in order to determine whether or not the program would be feasible and effective for Contra Costa College. In 1982, we piloted with one division in our organizational structure a division which we called business and public services.

In the pilot project, any student planning to enroll in more than six units at Contra Costa College and planning to take a course in the business and public services division was required to be both assessed and advised prior to enrollment.

However, in terms of that assessment advising, we felt a serious responsiblity to insure that if we began to ask students to take assessment tests that we as Instructional Advisors and Counselors, would be able to make some reasonable use of those assessment scores, such that assessment was not yet another rope which we put students through, which potentially humiliated them and which we did not use in a responsible manner.

So we developed our course expectations book. We requested that every department in the college submit information on each of their courses, including an entry level expectation which the instructors have, any prerequisite courses, the textbook reading level, the number and amount of writing assignments per week, and the style of those writing assignments, the average amount of pages of reading per week, and any additional comments regarding all presentations and information regarding the number and type of examinations which students would be facing in the course.

In addition, instructors were allowed to make any additional comments which would be of use to students before enrolling in their courses.

It was then and still is today the assessment scores and we're using some tests prepared by the College Board, three tests from the descriptive text of language skills, reading comprehension, sentence structure and logical relationships. And, a choice of one test from the descriptive tests of mathematical skills, it is a student's choice, either basic arithmetic, elementary algebra, or intermediate algebra. These assessment scores and our course expectations form the core of the advising process.

We have and are very covetous of the maintenance of an advisory rather than a placement process. After the student sits in consultation with an instructor or a counselor, he or she enrolls in the courses which he or she chooses. However, most students will take our advising and that makes it paramount that advising be accurate. So the instructor discusses with the student or the counselor discusses with the student, the course expectations, as related to the student's ability based on these academic assessments instruments. And we realize that those are somewhat limited in some cases, and totally inappropriate in other cases. We also realize that things like motivation, the time that a student will have to spend on the assignments, etc., are major factors and that is why we have very much resisted going to a placement style system.

The pilot project was so successful, that we were able to go college wide with assessment advising. We did evaluate the pilot project, we assessed it well, we solicited comments from instructors, counselors, classified staff and students and the response was overwhelmingly favorable. In addition we looked at retention statistics, and for example, the business department is just one example and there are further examples of this retention information in this report, in your pamphlet. The business department for example and I hope I'm remembering these accurately, I believe in 1980 had a retention rate of 65%, in 1981, this is the spring semester, Spring of 1981, a retention rate of 63%, and in the spring of 1982, the spring of the pilot project which the business department was involved in, had a retention rate of 75%, so in all the other departments in the division increased as well.

The faculty senate at Contra Costa College passed a resolution requesting that all the divisions be allowed to participate in this pilot project. And at this point it might be interesting for you to know the faculty were doing the advising on a voluntary basis. That is not the case now, because we have gone to something called the flexible calender, which allows us certain non-teaching days where faculty choose other assignments and so faculty are now being compensated for advisement in a slightly

different way, but the faculty felt that it was worth it to them, to put in the time to do the advising, for two main reasons.

One was they very much appreciated the opportunity to meet and talk with students before they faced those students in their classrooms. And, two, they very much appreciated the fact that when they walked into class on the first day, students were there with pencils, papers, books, motivation, and an understanding of the course expectations, and that they generally had a group of students whose skill levels were similar enough that the instructor felt that they could better offer instruction and maintain the standards that they intended to maintain.

We did go college-wide with our assessments advising project and it has been very successful, however we are a college that continually questions, which I think, I hope is to our credit, and so we wanted to do a more research based statistical style evaluation to determine whether or not our advisement of students was accurate and therefore effective. And so we did that and prepared this report which is also in your packet; we consulted with evaluation specialists, and statisticians at U.C. Berkeley to develop a plan whereby we could do some research to look at the effectiveness of our assessment instruments as a means of appropriately advising students into courses and, number two, and perhaps more importantly, the degree to which our curriculum seemed to be what it was described as being. Because we at Contra Costa have found that the use of the assessment advising has been one of the best means of curriculur review that we have yet encountered, because we feel very serious reponsibility to insure that the courses need to do what the students anticipate that they will do.

And so, we decided we were advised to divide our courses into catagories such that we could consider them and we did, we went through the course expectations book and we divided courses into four groups, high academic demand, moderate academic demand, basic skills, and courses for which our assessment instruments seemed inappropriate. There were physical education activities classes, performance classes in art, music and drama, certain performance labs in vocational areas such as welding, automotive services, etc. Courses for which the reading and writing skills are not essential but rather other skills are.

We looked at level one, two and three courses in a selective group of forty courses, representing those that students would ordinarily enter just coming into Contra Costa College for any given major, and we looked at seven hundred and eighty-five students who had taken the assessment test just prior to entrance into one of these courses.

We found out a lot of things. We found out that some of our courses are not what they are decribed to be, or that the assessment instruments do not seem appropriate for predicting student success of these courses.

We found out a lot of things. We found out that some of our courses are not what they are described to be, or that the assessment instruments do not seem appropriate for predicting student success in those courses.

We did use a means of discriminate analysis, whereby the computer tried to assess whether or not the courses were what they seemed to be, based on students' performance in those courses.

And, we did to our credit find out that our guidelines regarding the relationship between assessment scores and course expectations worked as well as the discriminate function which the computer used, just as aside, some of you might be interested to find that two of the main functions that the computer found, as most appropriate for the description of student skill levels was math tests taken and logical relationships that the ability to reason in terms of the discriminate analysis functions over weighted the ability to comprehend reading material.

We also found out that assessment advising is doing a better job of putting students into courses than the previous system, which is essentially chance, and therefore is not disadvantageous to students. But, we did discover some things that were not as much to our credit and we're willing to discuss those hoping that we are not the only community college in California that would find these things, but rather represents the tip of many in California, and throughout the state.

We found that we have some difficulty at both the high academic demand level, what we call level one, and the basic skills level, what we call level three, with students who seem to be appropriately advised into those courses being unable to succeed. The level three courses were of particular concern to us because the basic skills level for many students entering the community college is indeed, may I say, the beginning of their potential matriculation. Without success in that level, they essentially cannot matriculate toward the achievement of their educational plan. Even if that educational plan seems reasonable and even if those courses seem to be appropriate to their academic skills need.

We are an older college with an older faculty. We really cannot realistically revamp our entire curriculum because, we have only 7,000 students and we are attempting to maintain a full cadre of vocational programs and academic programs leading to transfer so, we have difficulty in terms of hiring all sorts of new faculty for students that exist. So many of our departments are smaller than is probably educationally best.

Therefore, the Dean of Instruction, Robert Martin, said if looking toward the faculty to do something may be a bit radical, and that is that we are looking to the faculty to for each faculty member on campus to take on the responsiblity of teaching students how to learn as well as what to learn.

We feel that there is probably something to be such an important factor in terms of differentiating student success and the lack of that success, and we feel that part of that has to do with students inability to know how to learn. So, as well as participating in instructor general advisement, each faculty member now will be asked in the next few years to join in a new pilot project which is described in a handout near the end of your packet, wherein every faculty member will essentially take some responsiblity for the instruction of basic skills if indeed you consider it to be a basic skill that students understand the particular learning

thinking strategy required for each course in each dicipline, and then in turn be able to utilize those strategies in situations of studying and autonomous learning beyond the classrooms, so that is one step that we are taking to improve our hopefully matriculation model.

In addition, we are proposing a new system whereby, each student will be asked to participate in an orientation to include assessment and advising as well as information regarding the expectations and procedural requirements of college, but in addition, that rather than saying that students taking more than six units must be assessed and advised, we are now going to say that any student planning to enroll in a course requiring academic skills, as in high academic, moderate academic, or basic skills needs to be assessed and advised, because it really doesn't matter how many units the student is taking, it really matters what those units are.

So, we at Contra Costa in terms of instructional advisement really didn't have time to think about it. It was an absolute necessity for us in order to make our project work. It has turned out to work very well, the faculty has been trained both by counseling and by themselves, and they have become very interested and we feel that not only have we helped students a great deal, but we have helped the college to be able to take a new look at its curriculum and to respond to students needs on the curricular level in a different way as well.

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